



Guidance on social networks

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Checked and Reviewed by:	Governing Body		
Approved by:	Governing Body		
Document Title:	Policy – Guidance on social networks		
Version Number:	5	Date of Next Review:	April 2024

Aims:

The school respects the staff's right to a private life and understands that the use of social networking sites has become the norm. However, the school must protect the confidentiality of its pupils, employees, volunteers and protect its reputation. This guidance is in addition to the School's existing e-safety policy and the trust's use of personal devices policy. The school recognises that use of social media is a popular way of communicating with friends and the wider world. Staff should take all reasonable steps to ensure that conversations either directly or indirectly related to school do not breach the confidentiality of pupils, parents, staff or Governors.

The Headteacher controls the release of all relevant school information, he/she decides on when to release information and to whom. Staff should not preempt any release of information by posting on social media sites. Where breaches of school privacy and /or disclosure of information not yet in the public domain are identified this will be treated as very serious and may lead to a disciplinary matter or in some cases dismissal.

Personal Conduct:

The school requires staff to:

- Use caution when posting any information on any networking sites or blogs.
- Refrain from naming the school or its location unless necessary (eg informing people about school events).
- Ensure that all posts do not reflect in a detrimental way on themselves or the school, even if only visible to "friends*"
- Be cautious when adding "friends" who are parents of pupils at this school.
- Teachers must not add pupils of the school as "friends".
- Report any online bullying concerning staff and pupils immediately to the Headteacher.
- Refrain from using social networking sites while at work.
- Protect their identities from theft and ensure all passwords are enabled and secure.
- Ensure that there are no online conversations between staff and parents with regard to children in their class except through Tapestry, school email accounts, Gateway or SchoolComms. All such conversations should be held at a mutually convenient time, with no expectation that the staff member should be available outside of normal working hours.

Actions:

- The school reserves the right to monitor staff's internet usage on school devices. Should this be necessary, the school will endeavour to inform the individual that monitoring will take place and the reasons for it.
- Should disciplinary action be necessary school will follow the agreed Trust Code of Conduct policy.

The school asks that all staff consider the following before posting on social network sites:

- Would you want your employer to see it?
- Would you want people from your local community to see it?
- If in doubt, reflect on any potential posts. Do you still want to post it 48 hours later?
- Are you sharing private information about another person?

The rise of social media has allowed people to engage in professional and personal interactions on the global stage. The school does not wish to limit or inhibit legitimate conversations via the World Wide Web. But in order to protect the school and its community, it reserves the right to set out guidance on how issues related to school are discussed and shared.

The school hosts a school Twitter account @RattlesdenPS and YouTube account. These accounts are for:

- The promotion of school events
- A prompt for up-coming events
- A platform to showcase the excellent work of the school
- Links to useful websites for parents and carers.

Only children whose parents have given written permission should appear in tweets and posts.

Tweets from the twitter account should not:

- Match names to photographs

- Be used to express the personal view of the teachers
- Be used for conversations with parents or followers where face to face discussions are more appropriate.

*friends refers here to any social media contact on a platform where both parties have to agree to the connection eg Facebook friends